

E

189

.W18

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. E 189
Shelf .W 78

PRESENTED BY

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



THE
RIVAL CLAIMANTS
FOR
NORTH AMERICA.

1497-1755.

BY
JUSTIN WINSOR.

FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY, AT THE
ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 24, 1894.

Worcester, Mass.
PRESS OF CHARLES HAMILTON,
311 MAIN STREET.
1895.

THE RIVAL CLAIMANTS FOR NORTH AMERICA.

1497-1755.

IN considering the respective claims of the English and French to North America, it must be remembered that the conflict of rights is not only one on identical lines arising from discovery, but one also on opposed lines arising from different conceptions of the rights of discovery. The claims are also represented by contrary methods and purposes in enforcing them.

The French, in the time of Francis I. and later, claimed the new continent by reason of Verrazzano's voyage along its Atlantic coast. The claim, however, was not made good by permanent occupation anywhere along the seaboard of the present United States.

Moreover, the English, under the Cabots, had sailed along this coast earlier. Still it was not till nearly a century had passed that the English government, urged by the spirit which Hakluyt and Dr. Dee were fostering, awoke to the opportunity and began seriously to base rights upon the Cabot voyages. The French at a later day sought to discredit this English claim, on the ground that the Cabots were private adventurers and could establish no national pretensions. The English pointedly replied that their Henry VII. had given them patents which reserved to the crown dominion over any lands which were discovered. This reply was triumphant so far as it went, but it still left the question aside, whether coast discovery carried rights to the interior, particularly if such inland regions drained to another

sea. The English attempt in the latter part of the sixteenth century, under Raleigh's influence, to occupy Roanoke island and adjacent regions, but without definite extension westward, was in due time followed by successive royal patents and charters, beginning in 1606 and ending in 1665, which appropriated the hospitable parts of the continent stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific. For a north and south extension these grants almost exactly covered the whole length of the Mississippi, since the parallel of 48° , which formed the northern limit, and that of 29° , which made the southern, were respectively a little north of the source of the great river and just seaward of its deltas.

The charter of Acadia, granted by the French King three years before the first of the English grants, covered the coast from the 40° to the 46° , and was thus embraced in the pretensions of the English King, but his rival refrained from giving any westward extension, beyond what was implied in "the lands, shores, and countries of Acadia and other neighboring lands."

It is interesting to determine what, during this period of sixty years, mainly in the first half of the seventeenth century, were the notions, shared by the English King and his advisers, of the extent of this munificent domain, with which he and they were so free.

A few years before the first of these grants was made to the Plymouth Company, in 1606, Hakluyt had laid before the world, in Molineaux's great *Mappe-Monde*, the ripest English ideas of the new world, and these gave a breadth to North America not much different from what it was in reality. The Pacific coast line, however, was not carried above Drake's New Albion, our modern upper California. This left the question still undetermined, if one could not travel on a higher parallel dry-shod to Asia, as Thomas Morton, later a settler on Boston Bay, imagined he could.

Molineaux gives no conception of the physical distribution of mountain and valley in this vast area, further than to bulk the great lakes into a single inland sea. The notion of an immense interior valley, corresponding in some extent to our Mississippi basin, which Mercator forty years before had divined, had not yet impressed the British mind. Mercator, indeed, had misconceived it, in that he joined the Mississippi and St. Lawrence basins together, by obliterating the divide between them. In this way he made his great continental river rise in Arizona and sweep north-east and join the great current speeding to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Here, then, in the adequate breadth of the continent, as Mercator and Molineaux drew it, is conclusive evidence that the royal giver of these vast areas had, or could have had, something like a proper notion of the extent of his munificent gifts. At the date of the last of these charters, in 1665, Cartier and his successors had for a hundred and thirty years been endeavoring to measure the breadth of the continent by the way of the St. Lawrence and the great lakes. They sought to prove by inland routes whether the estimated longitude of New Albion had been accurate or not. There had, it is true, been some vacillation of belief meanwhile. One thing had been accomplished to clarify the notions respecting these great interior spaces. The belief of Mercator had given way to the expectation of finding a large river, flowing in a southerly direction, whose springs were separated from those of the St. Lawrence by a dividing ridge. It was not yet determined where the outlet of this great river was. Was it on the Atlantic side of Florida, as a long stretch up the coast from the peninsula was at that time called? Was it in the Gulf of Mexico, identifying it with the stream in which De Soto had been buried? Was it in the Gulf of California, making it an extension of the Colorado River? Each of these views had its advocates among the French, who had already learned something of the upper reaches of

both the Ohio and the Mississippi. It was left for Joliet and Marquette, a few years later, not to discover the Mississippi, but to reach the truth of its flow, and for La Salle to confirm it.

These latter explorations of the priest and trader gave the French such rights as came from traversing throughout the water-ways, which led with slight interruption from the water back of Newfoundland, to the Mexican gulf. In due time this immense valley of the Mississippi was entered by the British traders, as they discovered pass after pass through the mountain barrier, all the way from New York to Carolina. The French, indeed, had permanent settlements along the Illinois and on the lower Mississippi, but in other parts of the great valley, there is little doubt that wandering Britons were quite as familiar as the French trader or adventurer to the Indians. If the evidence is not to be disputed, there was among these hardy British adventurers, a certain John Howard, who was, perhaps, the first, on the English part, to travel the whole course of one of the great ramifications of the valley. It was in 1742 that he passed from the upper waters of the James over the mountains to New River, by which he reached the Ohio. Descending this main affluent, he was floating down the Mississippi itself, when he was captured by some French and Indians and conveyed to New Orleans. An air of circumstantiality is given to the expedition in the journal of John Peter Salley, who was one of Howard's companions. Fry, in his report to the Ohio Company at a later day, made something of this exploit as crediting the English with an early acquaintance with the great valley. The most western settlements of the Virginians are marked in Evans's map of 1755, as that of J. Keeney at the junction of Greenbriar and New River, and Stahlmaker's house on the middle fork of the Holston River. These isolated outposts of the English were an exception to their habit of making one settlement support another. As set forth by Mitchell,

the English alleged that the French planted their posts "straggling up and down in remote and uncultivated deserts in order thereby to seem to occupy a greater extent of territory, while in effect they hardly occupy any at all."

The claims then of these rival contestants for the Trans-Alleghany region, as they respectively advanced them at the time, were thus put :

The English pretended to have secured their rights by a westward extension, from the regions of their coast occupation, and down to 1763 they stubbornly maintained this claim, though forced to strengthen it, first, by alleging certain sporadic, and sometimes doubtful and even disproved, wanderings of their people beyond the mountains; and second, by deriving an additional advantage from professed rights ceded to them by the Iroquois.

When the main grants to the Plymouth and London Companies were superseded by less extensive allotments, this same sea-to-sea extension was constantly reinforced as far as iteration could do it. The provincial charter of Massachusetts, for instance, in confirming the earlier bounds, carried her limits west towards the South sea. That of Virginia did the same, but with so clumsy a definition that the claims of Massachusetts and Virginia collided in the Ohio Valley and beyond.

The Congress at Albany, in 1754, re-affirmed this westward extension, but allowed that it had been modified north of the St. Lawrence only by concession to Canada under the treaty of Utrecht in 1713. A similar ground was assumed by Shirley at Paris, in 1755, when he met the French Commissioners in an endeavor to reconcile their respective claims.

The French, on the other hand, derived their rights, in their opinion, from having been the first to traverse the great valley, and because they had made settlements at a few points; and still more because they possessed and had settled about the mouth of the great river. It was their

contention, that such a possession of the mouth of a main stream, gave them jurisdiction over its entire watershed in the interior, just as their possession of the outlet of the St. Lawrence gave to France the control of its entire basin. Upon this principle, Louis XIV. had made his concession to Crozat for monopolizing the trade of the great valley.

These two grounds of national rights, the one arising from the possession of the coast and the other from occupation of a river-mouth, were consequently at variance with each other. They were both in themselves preposterous, in the opinions of adversaries, and both claimants were forced to abate their pretensions. The English eventually conceded to France all west of the Mississippi. France by the arbitrament of war yielded, to one people or another, the water-sheds of both the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence, just as the United States at a later day, making a like claim for the entire valley of the Columbia River through the discovery of its mouth, were forced to be content with but a portion of their demand.

There was another difference in the claims of the two contestants, which particularly affected their respective relations with the original occupants of the Great Valley.

The French asserted possession against the heathen, but cared little for his territory except to preserve it for the fur trade. They were not, consequently, despoilers of the savages' hunting-grounds. One to three square miles was estimated as each Indian's requirement for the chase. On the other hand, they seized such points as they wished, without thought of recompensing the savage owners. This prerogative of free appropriation, the French persistently guarded. When, in 1751, La Jonquière told the tribes on the Ohio, that the French would not occupy their lands without their permission, he was rebuked by his home government and Duquesne, his successor, was enjoined to undo the impression, which La Jonquière had conveyed to the savages.

On the other hand, the English pioneers, by their charters and patents, got a jurisdiction over, but not a fee in, the lands conveyed. In the practice which England established, or professed to establish, occupation could only follow upon the extinguishment by purchase or treaty of the native title.

Thus the Indian had exemplified to him by these intruders two diverse policies. He was inclined to the French policy because it did not disturb his life, and drive him away from his ancestral hunting-grounds. Duquesne was wont to tell the Indians that the French placing a fort on the Indian's lands did not mean the felling of forest and planting of fields, as it did with the English; but that the French fort became only a convenient hunting-lodge for the Indian, with undisturbed game about it.

The Indian was inclined to the English policy because it showed a recognition of his right to the soil, for which he could get cloth and trinkets and rum, if he chose to sell it. But he soon found that the clothes which he obtained wore out, the liquor was gone, and the baubles were worthless. The transaction, forced upon him quite as often as voluntarily assumed, was almost sure to leave him for a heritage a contiguous settlement of farmholders, who felled the forests and drove away his buffalo.

The savage was naturally much perplexed between these rival methods, in determining which was more for his advantage. Accordingly, we find the aboriginal hordes over vast regions divided in allegiance, some preferring the French and others the English, and neither, by any means, constant to one side or the other.

Moreover, these two diverse policies meant a good deal to such disputants in the trial of strength between them. The French knew they were greatly inferior in numbers, but they counted on a better organization, and a single responsible head which induced celerity of movement, and

this went a great way in overcoming their rival's weight of numbers. Joncaire boasted of this to Washington, when this Virginian messenger went to carry the warning of Dinwiddie. Pownall understood it, when he said that Canada did not consist of farms and settlements as the English colonies did, but of forts and soldiers. "The English cannot settle and fight too," he adds. "They can fight as well as the French, but they must give over settling." Thus the two peoples, seeking to make the new world tributary to the old, sought to help their rival claims by gaining over these native arbiters. It was soon seen that success for the one side or the other depended largely on holding the Indians fast in allegiance.

The savage is always impressed by prowess. The French for many years claimed his admiration through their military success, and the English often lost it by lack of such success. In personal dealing with the savage, the French always had the advantage. They were better masters of wiles. They knew better how to mould the savage passions to their own purposes. With it all, they were always tactful, which the English were far from being. William Johnson, the astutest manager of the Indians which the English ever had, knew this thoroughly, and persistently tried to teach his countrymen the virtue of tact. It was not unrecognized among his contemporaries that Johnson's alliance with a sister of Brant, a Mohawk chief, had much to do with his influence among the six nations.

"General Johnson's success," wrote Peter Fontaine, "was owing under God to his fidelity to the Indians and his generous conduct to his Indian wife, by whom he hath several hopeful sons, who are all war-captains, the bulwark with him of the Five Nations, and loyal subjects to their mother-country." This Huguenot, Fontaine, traced much of the misery of frontier life to the failure of the English to emulate the French in intermarrying with the natives, and he, curiously rather than accurately, refers the absence

of the custom to an early incident in Virginia history, "for when our wise politicians heard that Rolfe had married Pocahontas, it was deliberated in council whether he had not committed high treason by marrying an Indian princess; and had not some troubles intervened which put a stop to the inquiry, the poor man might have been hanged up for doing the most just, the most natural, the most generous and politic action that ever was done this side of the water. This put an effectual stop to all intermarriages afterwards."

Both French and English were not slow in discovering that among the American tribes the Iroquois were the chief arbiters of savage destiny in North America. The struggle of each rival was to secure the help of these doughty confederates. In the early years of the European occupation, the Dutch propitiated the Iroquois and the French provoked them. The English succeeded to the policy of the Hollanders, and the French long felt the enmity which Champlain had engendered. The Dutch and English could give more and better merchandise for a beaver skin, and this told in the rivalry, not only for the friendship of the Iroquois, but for that of other and more distant tribes. This was a decided gain to the English and as decided a loss to the French, and no one knew it better than the losing party.

Throughout the long struggle, the English never ceased for any long period to keep substantial hold of the Iroquois. There were defections. Some portions of the Oneidas and Mohawks were gained by the Jesuits who settled their neophytes near Montreal. The Senecas were much inclined to be independent, and the French possession of Niagara and the arts of Joncaire helped their uncertainty. Every tribe of the United Council at Onondaga had times of indecision. But, on the whole, the English were conspicuously helped by the Iroquois allegiance, and they early used it to give new force to their claim for a westward extension.

The country which the Iroquois originally occupied was that portion of the State of New York south of its great lake, and their tribes were scattered through the valley of the Mohawk, along the water-shed of Ontario, and throughout the country holding the springs of the Susquehanna and the Alleghany. The Susquehanna had been from the days of John Smith an inviting entrance to the interior from the Chesapeake, and Champlain's deputy, in 1615, had found that it afforded a route to the sea from the Iroquois country.

It was a dispute between the French and the English, which of the two peoples first penetrated this Iroquois country. La Jonquière, in 1751, claimed the priority for the French. There can be little question, however, that whatever right followed upon priority belonged to the Dutch, and by inheritance to the English. This was always the claim at Albany, and when the French seized upon Niagara, the English pronounced it an encroachment upon the Iroquois country, as, indeed, Charlevoix acknowledged it was. At the same time the French contended that it was a part of the St. Lawrence valley, which was theirs by virtue of Cartier's and later discoveries. On this ground they also claimed the valley of Lake Champlain, and had advanced to Crown Point in occupying it, though the Iroquois considered it within their bounds.

So when the English seized Oswego it was in the French view an usurpation of their rights, "the most flagrant and most pernicious to Canada." This sweeping assertion, transformed to a direct statement, meant that the possession of Oswego gave the English a superior hold on the Indians. It also offered them a chance to intercept the Indians in their trading journeys to Montreal. This advantage was rendered greater by the English ability to give for two skins at Oswego as much as the French offered for ten at Niagara. De Lancey looked upon the English ability to do this as the strongest tie by which they retained the Indians in their alliance. "Oswego," said the French,

“gives us all the evils, without the advantages of war.” Duquesne, in August, 1755, confessed that it was nothing but a lack of pretext, which prevented his attacking this English post.

About the middle of the seventeenth century the Iroquois by conquests had pushed a sort of feudal sway far beyond their ancestral homes. They had destroyed the Hurons in the country west of the Ottawa. They had exterminated the Eries south of the lake of that name, and had pushed their conquests at least as far as the Scioto, and held in vassalage the tribes still farther west. They even at times kept their enemies in terror as far as the Mississippi. Somewhat in the same way they had caused their primacy to be felt along the Susquehanna. Their war parties were known to keep the fruitful region south of the Ohio in almost absolute desolation.

The area included in these conquests is, perhaps, a moderate estimate of what the English meant by the Iroquois claim. As early as 1697, the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, in formulating the English rights to sovereignty over the Iroquois, asserted something larger in saying that these confederates held “in tributary subjection all the neighboring Indians and went sometimes as far as the South Sea, the northwest passage and Florida, as well as over that part of the country now called Canada.” Mitchell, in 1755, claimed that by the conquest of the Shawnees in 1672 the Iroquois acquired whatever title the original occupiers of the Ohio valley had, and that their conquest of the Illinois carried their rights beyond the Mississippi.

The English turned these Iroquois conquests to their advantage by assuming that the regions covered by this supremacy fell to their jurisdiction as one of the considerations of their alliance with the confederates. This pretension, in its most arrogant form, allowed there was no territory not under Iroquois control east of the Mississippi,

unless it was the region of the south, where, with equal complacency, the English used their friendship with the Cherokees, Chickasaws and Creeks to cover all territory of the modern Gulf States, with a bordering region north of them. In Huske's English map of 1755, even this territory of the southern tribes is made tributary to the Iroquois, as well as all east of the Mississippi and the Illinois and Lake Michigan, and of a line thence to the upper waters of the Ottawa.

In pushing their conquests to the Illinois, the Iroquois claimed, as Pownall tells us, that they warred upon these distant savages because it was necessary to protect the beaver, which the Illinois were exterminating. There was little reason for so benign an excuse, for the ravages of the confederates were simply prompted by an inherent martial spirit. So distinguished a student of their career as Mr. Horatio Hale is inclined to give them a conspicuously beneficent character, which, however, hardly met the approval of a more famous student, the late Francis Parkman.

This Iroquois-English claim had distinguished advocates in Colden, Franklin and Pownall, but there was some abatement at times in its pretensions. Sir William Johnson, in 1763, traced the line of this dependent country along the Blue Ridge, back of Virginia to the head of the Kentucky River, down that current to the Ohio above the falls; thence to the south end of Lake Michigan; along its eastern shore to Mackinac; and northeast to the Ottawa and down that river to the St. Lawrence. The right of the English king to such a territory as this dated back, as the English claimed, to an alleged deed of sale in 1701, when the Iroquois ceded these hunting-grounds to English jurisdiction, in addition to their ancestral lands. It was, as they claimed, a title in addition to that of their sea-to-sea charters. When the French cited the Treaty of Ryswick (1697) as giving them sway over the river basins where they held the mouths, and claimed this as paramount to any rights the Iroquois could bestow, the English fell back on these

territorial charters as the most ancient and valid claim of all.

If the English charter claims were preposterous, this supplemental one was, in even some part of contemporary opinion, equally impudent and presumptuous. There was by no means an undivided sentiment among the colonists upon this point; and history has few more signal instances of tergiversation, than when, at a later day, the English government virtually acknowledged the justice of the French claim in urging the passage (1774) of the Quebec Bill. "We went to war," said Townshend, in the debates on this bill, "calling it Virginia, which you now claim as Canada."

We read in Franklin's statement, in 1765, before the Stamp Act Committee, that the Virginia Assembly seriously questioned the right of the king to the territory in dispute. George Croghan, on the contrary, in a communication to Secretary Peters of Pennsylvania, wondered how anybody could doubt that the French on the Alleghany were encroaching upon the charter limits of Pennsylvania.

The French were more unanimous in their view; but it was only gradually that they worked up to a full-expression of it. Bellin, the map-maker for Charlevoix, had drawn in his early drafts the limits of New France more modestly than the French government grew to maintain, and he was soon instructed to fashion his maps to their largest claims. In like manner, the earliest English map-makers slowly came to the pitch of audacity which the politicians stood for, and Bollan, in 1748, complained that Popple (1732), Keith (1738), Oldmixon (1741), Moll, and Bowen (1747) had been recusant to English interests. It was not till Mitchell produced his map in 1755 that the ardentest claimant for English rights was satisfied.

The instructions of Duquesne, in 1752, say that "'tis certain that the Iroquois have no rights on the Ohio, and the pretended rights through them of the English is a

chimera." In the negotiations of the Treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, the English had succeeded in getting an admission from the French which required all the resources of French diplomacy to qualify. This was an acknowledgment of the English sovereignty over the Iroquois. The French at a later day, when they felt better able to enforce their views, sniffed at the obligation and called the phrase "a simple enunciation" in words of no binding significance,—a summary way of looking at an obligation which could demolish any contract. When they condescended to explain what they sniffed at, they insisted that the Iroquois themselves never acknowledged such a subjection. Sir William Johnson was frank enough to call the connection of the English and Iroquois one of alliance rather than subjection. The French farther pointed out what was true, that the Iroquois did not always consider it necessary to consult the English when making treaties or declaring war. Again, when forced to other explanations, the French maintained that the subjection of the Iroquois in their persons did not carry sovereignty over their lands. If it did, they said, the Iroquois who occupy lands at Caughnawaga, would be equally subject in land and person, and that would involve the absurdity of yielding to the English jurisdiction territory at the very gates of Montreal.

There was another clause in this treaty of Utrecht which the French were hard put to interpret to their advantage. This was the clause by which the French acknowledged the English right to trade with all Indians. The minutes of instruction given to Duquesne, show how this was interpreted. "The English may pretend that we are bound by the Treaty of Utrecht to permit the Indians to trade with them; but it is sure that nothing can oblige us to allow this trade on our own lands." This, in the light of the French claim to the water-sheds of the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi, would debar the English from trading at Oswego, and on the Ohio.

The English had, in 1726, by a treaty made on September 14, and which Governor Pownall prints in his *Administration of the Colonies*, secured a fresh recognition by the Iroquois of their guardianship over them. By this compact the Senecas, Cayugas and Onondagas, falling in with the concessions of the Mohawks and Oneidas in 1684, surrendered a tract from Oswego to Cayahoga (Cleveland), with an extent inland of sixty miles.

A score of years and more passed thereafter before the French became fully sensible that they must forcibly contest their claim to the Ohio. By this time their plan had fully ripened of connecting Canada and Louisiana by a chain of posts, and of keeping the English on the seaward side of the Alleghanies. In this, they were convinced, lay a riper future for New France rather than in crossing the Mississippi and disputing sovereignty with the Spaniard. This accomplished, they hoped to offer a barrier against the English effective enough to prevent their wresting from Spain the silver mines beyond the Mississippi.

The French had always claimed priority on the Ohio, and when Céloron was sent in 1749 to take formal possession along its banks, by hanging royal insignia on trees and burying graven plates in the soil, that officer professedly made “a *renewal* of possession of the Ohio and all its affluents,”—a possession originally established “by arms and treaties, particularly those of Ryswick, Utrecht and Aix-la-Chapelle.” There was urgency for such a “renewal,” for Céloron found that the English were already in possession of the country, so far as the friendly sanction of the natives signified it. Thus the Iroquois claim to that extent had proved effective, and Colden has distinctly expounded it in his *History of the Five Nations*. It was also clearly traced in maps by Jefferys in 1753, and by Mitchell and Huske in 1755.

It was, therefore, a necessity for the French to use force if they were to make good their claims by holding the

valley. Accordingly, we find in 1751, La Jonquière instructed "to drive from the Beautiful River (Ohio) any European foreigners, and in a manner of expulsion which should make them lose all taste for trying to return." With the usual French diplomatic reservation, that governor was further enjoined "to observe notwithstanding the cautions practicable in such matters."

There is a *Mémoire* of 1751 which sets forth the French anxiety lest the English, by securing a post on the Ohio, should be able to keep the Indians in alienation from the French. Such English success would mean a danger to French communications with the settlers on the Mississippi, who stood in particular need of Canadian assistance in the war which was waged against them by the Carolina Indians, instigated by the English there. Without such a bar to their progress, as the French possession of the Ohio, the English could easily advance, not only upon the French posts among the Illinois, but they could endanger the portage of the Miami, which was the best route from Canada, and which if lost might involve the abandonment of Detroit.

The conclusion of this complaint is two-fold : Detroit must be strengthened by a farming population about it for its support in order to preserve it as the best place to overawe the continent. The Illinois country must be protected ; its buffalo trade fostered ; that animal's wool made marketable ; and the custom of salting its flesh prevail so that the necessity of depending on Martinico for meat be avoided.

The movement of the French on the Alleghany in 1754 had put an end to temporizing. Albemarle, who was England's ambassador at Paris, was a butterfly and a reprobate, and he was little calculated to mend matters, now easily slipping from bad to worse.

A tough and sturdy young Yankee, then keeping school in Worcester, Mass., John Adams by name, represented the rising impatience of the colonists, who had not forgotten their yeoman service at Louisburg. He looked forward to

the complete expulsion of "the turbulent Gallicks!"

The year 1755 opened with events moving rapidly. In January, France proposed to leave matters as they were and let commissioners settle the dispute in details. England in response fell back on the treaty of Utrecht. In February, France proposed as a substitute that all east of the mountains should belong to England, and all west of the Alleghany River and north of the Ohio should fall to France. This left as neutral territory the slope from the mountains to the Alleghany and the region south of the Ohio. In March, England assented to this, provided the French would destroy their posts on the Alleghany and Ohio. This would make a break in the French cordon connecting Canada with the Mississippi, and would give the English an advantage in the control of the neutral country. So France refused the terms. In June, England again resorted to the conditions of Utrecht, and insisted on the validity of the Iroquois claim. France reiterated her denial of such a claim, as regards the territory, but acknowledged it as regards the persons of the confederates. England insisted, as well she might, that this was not the interpretation put upon similar provisions in other treaties. England now reminded Braddock of this provision in the treaty of 1726, and instructed him to act accordingly. This brought the business to the pitch of war, though both sides hesitated to make a declaration. Galissonnière claimed it to be the testimony of all maps that France was right in her claim, and her possession of what she strove for was now to be settled by sterner evidence.

Danville and the other French map-makers had been brought to representations that kept Galissonnière's statement true. The English cartographers had done equally well for their side, and Mitchell could be cited to advantage. His *Map of the British and French Dominions in North America* was based on documents which the English Board of Trade thought best enforced their claim, and the

publication, when made, in 1755, was dedicated to their secretary. In an accompanying text the English claim was pushed to its utmost, and every old story was revamped which served to bolster pretensions of the English preceding the French in exploring the country, reviving the antiquated boast that New Englanders had even preceded the French in crossing the Mississippi, and had really furnished the guides for La Salle's discoveries.

Perhaps the best knowledge which was attainable at the time, of the valley of the Ohio, had been reached by Christopher Gist, who, in his wandering, had corrected the supposed curves and trends of that river. Lewis Evans, in June, 1750, made his proposals to visit and map the country under disguise as a trader, and in the pay of the province of Pennsylvania. His map of the *British Middle Colonies* was published at Philadelphia just in time to be of use to Braddock. Washington later said of it that, "considering the early period, it was done with amazing exactness." The Governor of Pennsylvania was satisfied that Evans had mapped the Alleghanies correctly, and contended that this new draft showed how much would be lost if the English made these mountains their bounds.

Of the country in dispute Evans's map in one of its legends represents: "Were nothing at stake," it reads, "between the crown of Great Britain and France but the lands in the Ohio, we may reckon it as great a prize as has ever been contended for between two nations, for this country is of that vast extent westward as to exceed in good land all the European dominions of Great Britain, France and Spain, and which are almost destitute of inhabitants. It is impossible to conceive, had His Majesty been made acquainted with its value and great importance, and the huge strides the French have been making for several years past in their encroachments on his dominions, that His Majesty would sacrifice one of the best gems in his crown to their usurpation and boundless ambition."

The opinion of James Maury that whoever was left at the end of the war in the possession of the lakes and the Ohio would control the continent, was not, at this time, an unfamiliar one in the public mind. It was, moreover, not unconnected with the belief that in the time to come, a route west by the Hudson or the Potomac, connecting with these vaster water-ways of the interior, would make some point on the Atlantic coast "the grand emporium of all East Indian commodities." We have lived to see the prophecy verified, but by other agencies.





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 011 697 440 A

